

Septic systems

LOCAL/REGION

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Snug Harbor project tops special town meeting agenda

By John Chaffee
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DUXBURY — A proposed \$500,000 solution to septic waste problems in the Snug Harbor business district is expected to generate the most discussion at a special town meeting Monday.

The 11-article warrant calls for spending \$1,029,376 for a variety of items ranging from paying for new town-employee contracts to buying 2,000 portable chairs for use at town meetings and high school graduations.

The state Department of Revenue is expected to certify that the town has more than \$2 million in free cash, a combination of free cash carried over from the previous fiscal year plus unanticipated revenues and unspent appropriations.

Last year, the town had \$1.67 million in state-certified free cash.

Free cash typically consists of the previous fiscal year's unanticipated revenues and unspent appropriations returned to the town treasury.

Town Clerk Nancy Oates said yesterday that 9,119 residents are eligible to vote at the meeting, but only a few hundred are expected to be at the junior-senior high school auditorium for the 7:30 p.m. start.

The Snug Harbor project, for which planning funds were appropriated at the annual town meeting earlier this year, calls for solving harbor pollution problems by building a shared sewage collection and disposal system.

Shared systems, a hybrid between conventional sewer and single-user septic systems, offer a new way to solve wastewater disposal problems under the state's Title 5 regulations.

Duxbury

If voters approve, 11 Snug Harbor businesses would be linked to a common sewer line, and effluent would be pumped under Harrison Street to a leaching field near the eighth green of the Duxbury Yacht Club golf course.

Two of the three selectmen, Chairman Friend Weiler and Selectman James Murphy, have indicated they favor having the town recover most of the cost by assessing each business the full cost of its share of the system.

The third member of the town's governing body, Selectwoman Margaret Kearney, said because the project will benefit the public at large, she wants the town to pay 15 percent of all engineering and construction costs.

The board of health, noting the value of cleaning up the harbor and maintaining a healthy business community, recommended that the town pay 25 percent of all costs.

If the project is to be paid for through borrowing, as called for in the article, a two-thirds vote would be needed to adopt it; if it's to be paid for from free cash, only a majority vote would be required.

Other issues to be considered include appropriating \$298,676 to fund new contracts for local police and municipal clerical workers, \$20,000 to buy portable chairs, \$10,000 for a management study and \$50,000 to meet the town's share of a \$3 million harbor dredging project.

The school department seeks \$71,200 for a variety of purposes, including buying the portable chairs. But Superintendent Eileen Williams noted that the town will receive \$146,000 more in state education aid than was anticipated when the current school budget was adopted.